GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1920
ANSWERED ON:03.08.2001
FAILURE OF PDS IN BIHAR
DINESH CHANDRA YADAV;RAM JEEVAN SINGH

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Plan has revealed that people living belowthe poverty line are no longer PDS beneficiaries in the State of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for the failure of PDS in the State;

(d) whether the Union Government have initiated any corrective steps in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHAUHAN)

(a), (b) and (c) Planning Commission in the Mid-Term appraisal of 9th Five Year Plan has cited a study in Bihar which has reported inter alia that on the whole, only Government staff, agents and retailers benefit from the scheme.

Public Distribution System (PDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of Government of India and the State Governments/UT Administrations. While the Central Government is responsible for procuring and making available to the States the PDS commodities to the Principal Distribution Centres, identification of BPL population, issue of ration cards and distribution of subsidised foodgrains to the cardholders rests with the State Governments.

It is not correct that people living below the poverty line are no longer PDS beneficiariesin the State of Bihar. As per the report received from Government of Bihar, however, at present the prevailing prices of foodgrains available in open market is nearly at par with the rates of BPL foodgrains at the retail level. It is further reported by Bihar Government that,therefore, beneficiaries under BPL category are not much inclined to lift their foodgrains from PDS. Lifting of foodgrains during last four years is as follows:

(figures in MT)

	Allocation		Lifting	
	Rice	Wheat	Rice	Wheat
1997-98	380560	545560	158258	414105
1998-99	412320	618480	227075	533418
1999-2000	412320	618480	216977	575927
2000-2001	824640	1236950	109205	280919

(d)&(e): State Government of Bihar has been requested to initiate suitable measures atall levels to rejuvenate the Public Distribution System. State Governments have been requested to closely monitor PDS at the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) and other levels and make arrangement for distribution of the PDS commodities to the target beneficiaries in a transparent andaccountable manner with the active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) .